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Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Wednesday, 9 July 1997, at 10 a.m.

President:	Mr. GALUŠKA	(Czech Republic)
later:	Mr. HENZE (Vice-President)	(Germany)
later:	Mr. GALUŠKA (President)	(Czech Republic)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

COORDINATION OF THE POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND OTHER BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING THEMES (agenda item 4):

(a) MAINSTREAMING THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE INTO ALL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (E/1997/66)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to begin its debate on questions of coordination by considering agenda item 4 (a) and requested the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women to introduce the report on the topic (E/1997/66) and to moderate the debate.

Ms. KING (Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women) said that the goal of gender mainstreaming was such that all the components of the United Nations system and all intergovernmental agencies had a responsibility in its attainment. The outcome of the day's deliberations should be a set of clear recommendations to those actors. Whatever their area of activity, their primary goal was the improvement of the lives of women and men; for it was women and men who ultimately benefited from, or were disadvantaged by, the concepts employed and the measures taken. However, as long as the issue was viewed from the angle of "people" or the "community" without explicitly taking into account the different concerns and experience of men and women, there was every likelihood that the results of the measures adopted would perpetuate women's inequality.

Virtually all the components of the system had pledged their support for gender mainstreaming in the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women; but little had actually changed. The Council and all States Members should recognize that the principle of equality between men and women, which was recognized in the Charter, was of vital importance to the comprehensive implementation of the results of the recent international conferences. The new approach to achieving that objective, which would include, in particular, systematic use of gender-specific analyses in all aspects of the work of the United Nations, should be an integral part of the Organization's programme of reform. The vigorous advocates of the cause of women were best suited to bring about a change in traditional modes of thought and analysis, which were

responsible for countless numbers of the world's women being systemically disadvantaged. However, their success would depend on the readiness of other actors to join them in forming strategic alliances.

Coordination should not be restricted to programmes and units specifically responsible for women's issues: every issue should be considered, and every decision taken, with full consideration of gender factors. To do so required resolute political commitment by Member States and the adoption of concrete measures by the system's components to institutionalize the inclusion of gender-specific factors.

The recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report were directed at putting words into practice. The five debating panellists would address several issues concerning the coordination of gender mainstreaming, based on their experience within their respective organizations, and would certainly describe examples of successful coordination, the obstacles encountered and the appropriate remedies. Their frank assessment of the current situation would assist Member States in reaching agreed conclusions.

Ms. OGATA (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said that the progress made since the Beijing Conference was far from satisfactory. A total of 38.7 per cent of UNHCR's personnel was female. She underscored the importance of the current meeting for UNHCR which, in more than 122 countries, was endeavouring to protect women from violence and the trauma of war, to ensure they had equal access to basic assistance, to help them become self-supporting and to enable them freely to return to their homes without fear. For all too long refugee women had been considered to be particularly vulnerable; it was necessary to recognize the decisive social and economic role they played and their contribution to preserving family and community life and seeking solutions to refugee problems.

Where protection for refugee women was concerned, it was apparent that refugee status was increasingly being granted to women who were persecuted on account of their sex. Training projects had been developed to combat the reluctance of women victims to seek justice and to protect their rights when in distress. UNHCR had made great efforts to equip refugee camps with protective devices and had adopted guidelines on preventing and responding to sexual violence against refugees. The combination of security measures and of social measures designed by women had helped to reduce violence.

In terms of assistance, UNHCR was endeavouring to ensure that food distribution increasingly involved women. Its assistance programmes were designed to be self-supportive and to empower refugee women. Education and information were important in that respect. UNHCR had developed "quick impact projects" to achieve the post-conflict reintegration of refugees within society. The projects, which had first of all been designed for Central America, had been adapted to Rwanda and Bosnia and implemented with the participation of, and essentially on behalf of, women.

Cooperation between institutions, Governments, host countries and refugees should be enhanced. Inter-agency collaboration had already improved. The search for common positions had, for example, made it possible to obtain results with regard to the discrimination suffered by Afghan refugee women. It would perhaps be desirable to include an optional protocol on women in the various memoranda of understanding concluded between the United Nations agencies. UNHCR also cooperated closely with NGOs in capacity-building.

Finally, she referred to the security of humanitarian workers, and in particular female humanitarian workers, and suggested that the security guidelines for women, drawn up in 1995, should be reviewed to reflect the specific risks facing female staff serving in the field and to include procedures for systematically reporting any threats or violence specifically aimed at women.

Mr. AHMED (Associate Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) said that it had to be clearly understood that gender mainstreaming went beyond the implementation of projects focusing on women and sought to ensure that women's priorities, and not just those of men, were taken into account in developing and implementing policies. UNDP, in conjunction with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and its other partners, was endeavouring to strengthen the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. It had carried out a study into mainstreaming activities in 20 countries and had conducted consultations on the subject in conjunction with several other institutions. The results of the study were set out briefly in a guidance note which had been sent to its country offices.

UNDP had drawn a number of lessons from its experience. First of all, the commitment of senior managers, whether at headquarters or at the country level, and staff participation were essential. Secondly, those institutions

which had incorporated gender mainstreaming into their practice and procedures were better able to integrate it into their programmes. Thirdly, the role of units responsible for gender issues as catalysts and in monitoring was decisive, and their heads should be at a senior decision-making level within the organization. Fourthly, each individual staff member was responsible for gender mainstreaming within the organization's programmes. When responsibility was shared, gender mainstreaming moved extremely rapidly. Lastly, policies and institutions should evolve so as to be able actively to promote and facilitate the attainment of gender equality. That would take time, and UNDP was working on ways of establishing short and medium-term benchmarks of progress. In order to take account of all those lessons, in addition to issuing guidelines to its offices, which were urged to assign 20 per cent of their resources to the advancement of women, UNDP had appointed 20 gender advisers who would work with the resident coordinators.

Indicators to assess the changes made - occasionally a difficult task - were important, as was identifying the results achieved by organizations. Accordingly, in conjunction with its partners, UNDP was endeavouring to perfect new indicators. It was reviewing all its job descriptions, which would henceforth include mandatory accountability for gender mainstreaming. Another problem was the development of staff capacity for gender mainstreaming. The Gender in Development programme was working closely with the Learning Resources Centre in integrating gender mainstreaming. As part of its support for the resident coordinator system, UNDP was cooperating with UNIFEM, which ensured that the priorities of women's organizations were reflected in inter-agency discussion and action. UNDP held regular joint meetings with UNIFEM, which henceforth participated in its programme management monitoring committee. It had also benefited from the activities of the Division for the Advancement of Women and of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and from the work of bilateral agencies. One of the most important areas of cooperation in which UNDP had been engaged was common country assessment: in that area, it was seeking to ensure the inclusion of gender indicators concerning, in particular, poverty, access to political, social and economic resources, nutritional levels, children's health and education, and food security. After giving some examples of inter-agency collaboration in the field, he concluded

by expressing the hope that the current reform of the Organization would make it possible to provide a structure and determine priorities that would favour gender equality.

Ms. BERTINI (Executive Director, World Food Programme (WFP)) said that gender mainstreaming in all the programmes and policies of the United Nations bodies was an objective that produced more words than deeds, despite the Secretary-General's strong moral commitment to it. WFP's role was to provide food aid to poor, hungry people. However, women made up the bulk of the world's poor, and it was when assistance was provided to them directly that it had the greatest impact on the food security of households and on children's nutrition. In order to implement the commitments made at Beijing, WFP was ensuring that women directly received a greater share of food aid and had access, on equal terms, to gainful activity and education. In order to integrate gender mainstreaming into all its activities, it had set concrete objectives, strategies and success indicators. Lastly, in order to ensure accountability for its results, it had taken a number of measures: the preparation of gender-disaggregated statistics, the adoption of plans of action comprising goals and indicators to put into practice the commitments made at Beijing, the establishment, at headquarters, of an ad hoc team responsible for monitoring the implementation of all plans of action and for giving its views on an overall strategy, the definition of gender-specific skill profiles for management and advisory positions, the introduction of a network of liaison centres at headquarters and in the different countries, and the preparation of reports on the measures adopted to implement the commitments to women. In addition, WFP had begun to draw up gender-specific indicators for each sector of assistance and to train staff in the use of qualitative follow-up techniques. As the reduction of gender inequality was an integral part of strategic regional planning, appropriate training was also provided. Lastly, accountability also concerned the percentage of financial resources assigned to programmes on behalf of women.

Where the proportion of women among WFP's staff was concerned, she said that 25 per cent of officials at headquarters were women, in comparison with only 20 in the field offices. WFP would endeavour to improve those figures.

Ms. TRONE (Deputy Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)) said that she first of all wished heartedly to commend the

Division for the Advancement of Women for having prepared the report under consideration, which was a major step forward in terms of the analysis and recommendations made. Gender equality was still a revolutionary idea, and it was essential for everyone to appreciate its importance. The members of organizations and of Governments themselves should integrate the concept in their programmes. The latter should aim to change individuals' attitudes and thinking and to take into account the fundamental realities affecting individual lives. Women should realize they were the equals of men, so that they could develop the confidence to take advantage of the choices and opportunities open to them. Men should be convinced of gender equality, so that they could accept the changes the concept entailed.

It was essential to foster an enabling environment for individuals to make the most of their potential. To do so, leaders at all levels should resolutely support gender equality and adopt measures to make it effective. As early as in 1976 UNFPA had published guidelines for incorporating women's concerns into population and development activities. In 1995 it had published new guidelines on gender, population and development to reflect in its programmes the full variety of gender-sensitive concerns. The problem was that although many people had become accustomed to the concept of women in development, the concept of gender in development was still ill-understood.

To establish an enabling environment it was essential also to train human resources and to reinforce institutional capacities. Theoretical and methodological training was essential, and UNFPA was currently training all of its staff on gender parity and preparing a training manual for national counterpart staff.

UNFPA was assisting ministries in different countries to formulate policies, strategies and guidelines for gender mainstreaming, to generate and analyse gender-disaggregated data and to integrate the research findings into programmes. It relied on the mass media and on community participation in its efforts to influence individual attitudes and behaviour. All the efforts made to foster gender equity and equality should be monitored and assessed, and quantitative and qualitative indicators had been developed for the purpose. NGOs clearly had an important role to play, and their capacity should be strengthened. UNFPA was actively contributing to the work of several inter-agency bodies - such as the Task Force on Basic Social Services for

All - and cooperated with numerous agencies or organizations (the Division for the Advancement of Women, the Commission on Human Rights, the International Red Cross). In March 1996 it had organized a technical consultation on female genital mutilation at Addis Ababa, which had been attended by participants from 25 countries, international NGOs, United Nations agencies and the Organization of African Unity. UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO had recently published a joint statement calling for the eradication of female genital mutilation.

Gender equality and equity had been recognized as an essential aspect of development and a vast array of organizations and bilateral donors were working to advance the gender agenda, making it all the more necessary to coordinate efforts to avert overlap and duplication. Regarding resources, gender issues should not be seen as a source of "added cost": on the contrary, they were an integral aspect of the design and formulation of policies and activities. Human and financial resources were nevertheless needed to ensure that programmes sufficiently addressed gender issues and that appropriate measures were taken. To advocate gender equality was to advocate justice and human rights.

Ms. CHINERY-HESSE (Deputy Director-General, International Labour Office) said that the reason ILO attached such importance to gender equity was that efforts to combat discrimination in employment had been at the root of its action throughout its 78 years of existence. She pointed out that women could not acquire self-esteem and self-confidence unless they were able to find work which gave them an income and independence. ILO's role was to ensure they had access to employment on equal terms.

To be effective, gender mainstreaming should be based on research and on the more technical aspects of the work of the United Nations specialized agencies: policy formulation, development of guidelines and training material, etc. Staff working in those fields - upstream from operational activities - should therefore also be sensitized to issues of gender equity.

Some of the first ILO Conventions, adopted in 1919, were essentially designed to protect women: maternity protection, nightwork, equal wages and equal opportunities. As early as the 1950s, the need to integrate gender equity issues had been recognized, and Convention No. 156, adopted in 1980,

referred no longer to women, but to workers with family responsibilities. It was clearly important to sensitize the governing bodies of the specialized agencies - and in particular of ILO - to the need for gender mainstreaming in standards, as it was they who approved them.

ILO was endeavouring further to sensitize not only all levels of its staff to gender issues, but also its constituents. At headquarters, there was a special unit responsible for women workers' questions. Gender specialists were employed in all countries and were networked.

In individual countries, programmes focusing on women were the first victims of budgetary cuts. For that reason, efforts at sensitization should essentially target decision-makers. However, the cuts in question would not occur if the programmes had been correctly integrated into broader programmes. Within ILO, assigning a budgetary item to gender mainstreaming would make it possible to remind Governments of their responsibilities when they introduced austerity measures.

Ms. KING (Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women) summarized the introductory statements. She said that it was clear that the advancement of women had made spectacular progress, not only within the entire United Nations system, but also at national level. Clearly, gender equality was henceforth recognized as a fundamental human right: recognition of the rights of women, taken in isolation, had been superseded by recognition of their role within the family and society.

Each of the organs and agencies of the United Nations system had apparently recognized the need to develop genuine strategies and to undertake specific actions for the advancement of women, by resorting to training, establishing liaison centres, preparing indicators and carrying out an assessment of the progress made in the field and at headquarters.

It was apparently also recognized that women had a specific role to play in the developing countries, particularly with regard to other women, and especially at the local level. In that regard, tribute should be paid in particular to UNFPA and UNICEF, who were largely responsible for the progress made and who were on the threshold of achieving numerical gender parity within their staff.

She drew the conclusion that it was no longer sufficient to set up departments or to adopt programmes focusing on the advancement of women or superficially to advocate gender parity: it was henceforth necessary to call for a wholesale commitment by national societies and for States to provide support.

Mr. SABOIA (Brazil) asked what impact the current reforms within the United Nations system might have on the gender mainstreaming in the system's programmes and policies. He asked whether it might not be negative, and whether the increasing tendency to recruit United Nations staff on a temporary basis might not have a harmful impact on the advancement of women.

He also asked how the adoption of a goal of strict numerical gender parity was compatible with the principle of equitable geographic representation.

Ms. WÖRGETTER (Observer for Austria) said that she would like to know what institutional changes were planned, for example, at UNDP, to achieve gender parity (for example in terms of providing information on trends, participation in integration by the various agencies, analysis of the data collected, the decisions taken by the agencies, the amounts assigned by budgets to departments responsible for the advancement of women and the assessment of integration programmes already carried out).

Mr. MABILANGAN (Philippines) pointed out that questions connected with the protection of the rights of women and their advancement as a whole were frequently addressed simultaneously by several organs within the United Nations system. As a result, the necessary action would require extremely close coordination and a human approach. For example, the problem of violence against migrant female workers was within the purview of both the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights, as well as, no doubt, that of UNHCR, ILO and UNFPA. He would like to know which agency actually was currently responsible for the protection of female migrant workers.

Ms. KUNADI (India), said that India attached great importance to gender mainstreaming in all the programmes and policies of the United Nations organs and advocated the implementation, in accordance with a fixed timetable, of the relevant provisions of the Beijing Platform for Action, to be reviewed in the year 2000, and made several suggestions in that connection.

The intergovernmental bodies within the United Nations system should all systematically integrate the advancement of women into their work, and particularly into their programme budgets and medium-term plans. To achieve the same goal, it was also important to enhance harmonization and coordination of the work programmes of the functional commissions of the Council, while the regional commissions should be called on to act as catalysts at the regional level. The Council should also be authorized, possibly on an annual basis, to monitor gender mainstreaming within the functional commissions, particularly as part of the follow-up to major United Nations conferences.

It would also be useful to strengthen accountability within the United Nations system, and her delegation would prefer directives, rather than discretionary guidelines, allowing them greater flexibility, to be sent to institutions. It was also imperative for United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies to address gender concerns when setting priorities, allocating resources and identifying actions to be undertaken.

The participants at the Beijing Conference had committed themselves to strengthening certain mechanisms, in particular the Division for the Advancement of Women, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, and that commitment should be fulfilled. In addition, the United Nations system should as quickly as possible eliminate barriers to the advancement of women within its own departments and organizations. Women should be given priority for appointment to posts subject to geographical distribution, and particularly senior policy-level and decision-making posts. The information provided by previous speakers to the Council was encouraging, but much remained to be done. Efforts should be pursued with greater vigour.

Ms. MOORE (Canada) said that the progress made since the Beijing Conference was very encouraging and the enhancement of responsibility at the higher levels of the Secretariat was auspicious.

The Associate Administrator of UNDP had referred to the results of a study concerning some 20 countries, and she asked him whether UNDP had drawn lessons from it for its programmes and policies. She also asked for details of UNDP's cooperation with UNIFEM.

Ms. FLOR (Germany) thanked the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General for having stressed the need further to increase

responsibility, at the highest level of the United Nations system, for integrating the advancement of women throughout the system. The fundamental norms and principles of their advancement were apparently established, and it was henceforth necessary to make them tangible. In that connection it was appropriate to recall that although the principle of "equal pay for equal work" had been theoretically established since 1944, it had not yet become established practice. Her delegation would like to know what practical difference there would be betweer institutional directives and guidelines in terms of data collection, the redesigning of questionnaires, etc.

She asked the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for details of the suggested optional protocols to the memoranda of understanding reached in the field with institutions. She asked the Associate Administrator of UNDP whether 20 per cent of overall projects were focused on the advancement of women and 80 per cent on other targets.

Ms. KING (Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women) reminded the representative of Brazil that it was not yet known what reforms of the United Nations system the Secretary-General would shortly announce. However, it was certain that gender parity within the staff of the Secretariat would remain a goal.

Ms. OGATA (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)) said that the principle of equitable geographical distribution was applied very flexibly by her Office, whose budget was funded by voluntary contributions. UNHCR was above all concerned to ensure that donor countries which themselves had to resolve refugee problems were represented among its staff. The Office therefore had all the flexibility necessary to ensure full gender parity among its staff, which was moreover its current practice with regard to both promotion and recruitment.

She reminded the representative of the Philippines that UNHCR's mandate did not extend to female migrant workers. Although they occasionally requested asylum, it was desirable to separate those two quite distinct issues.

Regarding the suggested optional protocols to the agreements reached with institutions present in the field alongside UNHCR, she said that she had not yet begun any official discussions. She simply felt that the time had come to consider the matter.

Mr. Henze (Germany), Vice-President, took the chair.

Ms. BERTINI (World Food Programme (WFP)), replying to the representative of Brazil, said that in recent years WFP had indeed resorted more frequently to temporary recruitment, although it was still possible for specialists to obtain a conventional contract of employment. However, in both cases, gender balance was more or less assured. In addition, compliance with the principle of geographical distribution posed a problem: WFP attempted to recruit staff in the developing countries, but the skilled staff it required were clearly more numerous in the developed countries. Nevertheless, WFP endeavoured to ensure that 50 per cent of its recruits were women, 50 per cent of whom were from the developing countries.

She sincerely hoped that where the question of gender parity within the Secretariat's staff was concerned, the Council would ask to be provided with precise results in terms of expenditure made and the actual numbers of staff.

Mr. AHMED (Associate Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)), said, in reply to the representative of Brazil, that when UNDP was required to implement reforms, it attempted to avoid introducing distortion. As it was not required strictly to observe the principle of geographical distribution, it recruited half of its staff from the donor countries and half from the developing countries benefiting from the Programme.

In reply to the Austrian delegation, he said that UNDP's overall goal of a 28 per cent female staff component had already been achieved, and the result should be improved on by the end of 1997. In addition, several women had been appointed to managerial positions, and it was to be expected that there would be several more such appointments in the next few months.

The review of budgetary allotments for country programmes would take into account the decision systematically to give priority to the advancement of women, and the decision would be reflected both in staff training and in the recruitment of consultants. Regarding the hierarchy and the transmission of information, he recalled that UNDP had set up an ad hoc mechanism for gender mainstreaming in its programmes. In addition, UNDP and UNIFEM held joint meetings and had already considered, at the regional level, the means of attaining the goals.

In reply to the Indian delegation, he said that following the Beijing Conference, cooperation with UNIFEM had considerably intensified. It was henceforth based on a note setting out the specific mandate of each institution with regard to gender mainstreaming. He said that the note was available for delegations to consult.

He assured the representative of Germany that UNDP had indeed allocated 20 per cent of its total funds to gender mainstreaming in its programmes and policies. Where the global programme was concerned, 10 per cent of funds were allocated to mainstreaming and the budget had three aims: to consolidate, perfect and implement methodologies and instruments for gender mainstreaming in UNDP activities; to encourage countries benefiting from the programme to develop appropriate practices and to encourage partnerships to emancipate women and to involve them in decision-making. At the country level, resident representatives had been requested to secure acceptance of the idea that 20 per cent of the basic resource allocation should be assigned to integration.

He informed the Canadian delegation that UNDP certainly took into account the lessons drawn from the studies, and intended, in particular, to review the country guidelines in their light. He also said that a fair share of the lessons should be implemented also at headquarters.

Mr. Galuška (Czech Republic) resumed the chair.

Ms. TRONE (United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)), said, in reply to the representative of the Philippines, that where migrant workers were concerned UNFPA's mandate was essentially to provide support for studies into migrations, taking account, inter alia, of gender-specific factors. Reproductive health was one area in which refugees were provided with assistance. UNFPA was endeavouring, in cooperation with the other agencies concerned, to extend that type of assistance to other categories of beneficiaries, and possibly to female migrants. It was currently focusing on providing women with information at an earlier stage, i.e. in their countries of origin.

In reply to the representative of Germany, she said that what distinguished guidelines was that they required results. At UNFPA a project could not be approved if it did not contain a gender-specific dimension.

The goal of parity had been achieved at UNFPA in the professional category, but not yet in general services. There were more than 50 per cent of women on the Executive Board. Those results were the outcome of a deliberate policy which had been pursued for 10 years with the active support of the heads of UNFPA.

Ms. KING (Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women) pointed out that there were many agencies within the United Nations system dealing with migrant workers, but that each of them had a precise mandate. The Population Division was not being dissolved; it henceforth came under the new departments with an economic and social vocation. Finally, the principle of equitable geographical distribution should not prevent the 20 or so countries that were not represented in the United Nations Secretariat from submitting women candidates.

Ms. ENGELBRECHT (South Africa) asked whether quantitative and qualitative indicators were being prepared and whether any efforts were being made by the various organizations to harmonize them. She also asked what measures were being taken system-wide to ensure that a gender-specific approach was integrated into all activities.

Ms. HOLDEN (United Kingdom) said that it was clear that gender mainstreaming in all programmes and policies entailed an integrated approach simultaneously focusing on capacity-building, training, institutional reform, etc. As resident coordinators had a key role to play in encouraging such an approach, she asked what measures were being taken or planned to draw their attention to the problem. She asked how they fitted into efforts to foster an enabling environment for development.

Ms. BANYA (Uganda) said that in order to remedy the regional imbalance in United Nations recruitment, applications from women from the least developed countries should receive special attention. She pointed out that under the recruitment freeze, preference was generally given to applicants supported by donor countries to fill junior professional officer posts. She asked what percentage of women had been recruited to the United Nations Secretariat from the developing countries during the previous five years.

Mr. WINNICK (United States of America) wondered whether it would be possible to integrate gender mainstreaming into programmes and activities focusing on good governance, which was still a new area. He also asked to what extent the Bretton Woods institutions and the United Nations system as a whole coordinated their activities in order coherently to integrate gender-specific issues into their various programmes, particularly in terms of macroeconomic policies.

Mr. DLAMINI (Observer for Swaziland) emphasized that it was crucially important to sensitize national officials and leaders to gender equity. Appropriate ad hoc machinery should be set up. He asked what measures were being taken by UNHCR on behalf of refugee women in the Great Lakes region and what measures were being taken to address the situation of female migrants.

Ms. LI Sangu (China) asked how concern for gender equity was reflected in the budget. As UNDP devoted 10 per cent of its funds to gender-specific activities, she asked how that resource allocation was reflected in the country programmes.

Ms. OGATA (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)) said that UNHCR had appointed a senior coordinator for refugee women, five regional advisers and, at the country level, 122 focal points for refugee women. The other component of UNHCR's action was training. Without going into details of the action undertaken on behalf of refugee women in the Great Lakes region, she mentioned the initiative on behalf of Rwandan women and referred to the importance given to women and to empowering them in post-conflict situations.

Ms. BERTINI (World Food Programme (WFP)) said that information on indicators could be found in a document available in the meeting room setting out WFP's policy on indicators. In her view, concern for gender equity could be one of the criteria adopted for assessing resident coordinators.

Ms. ACUNER (Turkey) emphasized the political dimension of the issue. It was not simply a matter of involving women more fully in decision-making, but of radically changing orientations and priorities. Such a thorough change necessarily met with resistance at all levels. She asked

whether it was the responsibility of UNDP's field offices to overcome resistance and whether any measures were planned or under way to transform women's issues into a topic for concerted action with national authorities.

Mr. ALOM (Bangladesh) pointed out that, under Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, there was nothing to authorize special measures to recruit women to the United Nations.

Mr. FERNANDEZ (Spain) stressed that the Economic and Social Council was responsible for ensuring gender parity as part of the follow-up to United Nations world conferences. He shared the opinion of the representative of Turkey and thought that the political dimension should be referred to in the commonly agreed conclusions. The report of the Secretary-General contained excellent proposals concerning the enhancement of coordination within the system in order better to integrate gender mainstreaming.

Ms. WILHELMSEN (Observer for Norway) said that the statements made by the representatives of WFP and UNHCR on the integration of gender-specific factors in the humanitarian field were very noteworthy. It would be desirable for agencies to adopt a standard form to report on the progress made in gender mainstreaming. The development of common indicators could facilitate harmonization.

Ms. GUITIERREZ (Observer for the Dominican Republic) said that in her view concern for gender equity should be one of the criteria for funding projects. She advocated strengthening the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).

Mr. IBRAHIM (Malaysia) said that he did not believe that it was necessarily a bad thing to entrust men with advocating gender equity. He suggested that UNIFEM would benefit if men were better represented in it.

Mr. AHMED (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) said that UNDP was currently endeavouring to perfect the gender empowerment measure (GEM) and the gender-related development index (GDI). It was the responsibility of officials to ensure that all programmes included specific indications of the expected progress in the area of gender parity and the advancement of women. Goals were set for all projects, on the basis of specific indicators, directed to elimination of poverty among women and

improved access by them to funds. It was a rule in all the country offices that orientations should be defined in consultation with women's associations and women's NGOs.

UNDP was endeavouring to enhance the role of resident coordinators in respect of gender mainstreaming through a closer partnership with UNIFEM. Where cooperation with IMF and the World Bank was concerned, the Inter-Agency Task Force on the Enabling Environment for Economic and Social Development, set up as part of the follow-up to the United Nations international conferences, and chaired by the World Bank, dealt in particular with gender-specific issues.

UNDP devoted 20 per cent (not 10 per cent, as China had stated) of its overall resources to gender-specific projects and hoped to be able to assign a further 10 per cent to actions for the advancement of women. Resident representatives were invited to discuss with national authorities to convince them of the need to devote 20 per cent of the funds for country programmes to gender-specific activities.

Ms. TRONE (United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)) said that the efforts at rationalization and harmonization under way in several international organizations should shortly lead to a set of common indicators.

Ms. KING (Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women) said that the Bretton Woods institutions were very active within the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality and were helping to draw up indicators and to prepare statistics on gender-specific aspects.

The representative of Bangladesh had raised a very important issue. Where recruitment was concerned, the United Nations Office of Human Resources Management always balanced Articles 8 and 101 of the Charter of the United Nations. In that connection, it should be borne in mind that article 4 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women supported the adoption of special measures aimed at eliminating such discrimination. In the same connection, the United Nations Administrative Tribunal had in recent years handed down two decisive rulings confirming the validity of special measures on behalf of women until the goal of parity was achieved.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.